

MEASURE Evaluation Strategic Information for South Africa Project: Data Demand and Information Use Approach

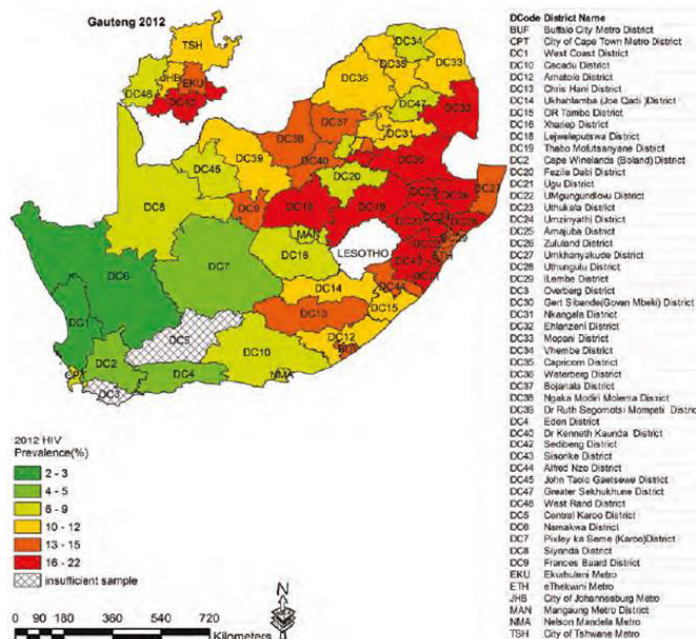
Background

The Department of Health (DoH) District Health Management Information System (DHMIS) Policy calls for revision of the National Indicator Data Set (NIDS) and the Provincial Indicator Data Set (PIDS) and its implementation, and as well as for strengthened use of information. This revision aims to enable the DoH and its partners to improve the health care system, and ultimately health outcomes. Up-to-date, relevant, good quality, reliable, and timely information from the routine health information system (RHIS) is essential for health decision making. Volumes of data are generated, involving a wide range of staff at various levels of the health system. Data is collected on over 100 indicators from over 4,000 health facilities in 52 districts of the nine provinces in South Africa.

Challenges:

- Health workers are infrequently trained on data demand and use (DDU).
- Many staff have limited awareness of, and fail to participate in, the established DoH data demand process – which is to review the National Indicator Data Set and the Provincial Indicator Data Set.
- Data is collected at health facilities, but there is little engagement with it before submission to the next level of the health system, nor are targets well known.
- Provision of feedback, performance review, and information use does not always flow down to health facilities.
- Although information is increasingly available, many staff do not find the presented formats useable, or know how to analyze and interpret data; data use in decision/policy making or advocacy is not institutionalized.

The data demand and information use approach



HIV prevalence by districts in South Africa, 2012
Shisana, O, Rehle, T, Simbayi LC, Zuma, K, Jooste, S, Zungu N, Labadarios, D, Onoya, D et al. (2014) South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey, 2012. Cape Town: HSRC Press

includes a powerful set of activities to ensure that programs and management:

- Specify upfront, and actively seek, the type of data they require (data demand).
- Engage with the data collected by analysis, interpretation, and utilization (information use).

The approach addresses technical, organizational, and behavioral determinants that affect DDU. When applied, the DDU approach improves information use for effective program implementation, improvement, advocacy, and evidence-based decision or policy making.

Response by MEval-SIFSA

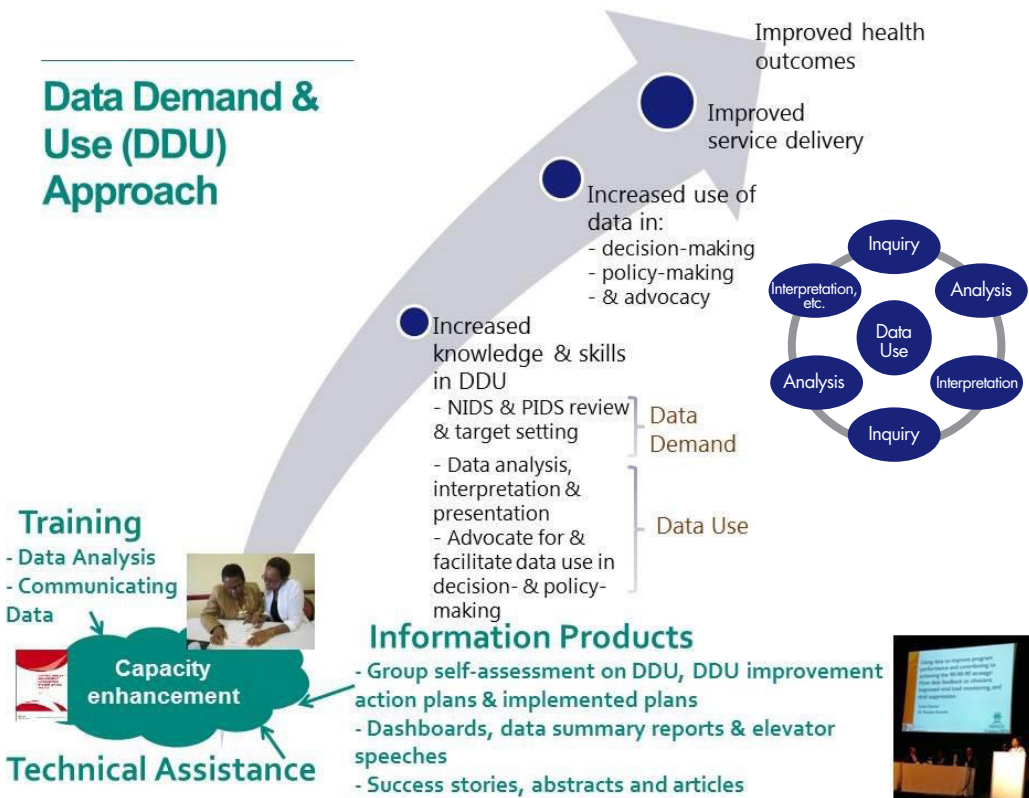
MEASURE Evaluation Strategic Information for South Africa (MEval-SIFSA) is helping the DoH at national, provincial, and district levels to improve its efficiency and effectiveness by identifying data needs, understanding

indicators and targets, improving data quality, analyzing data, and presenting and using information for decision/policy making to improve health outcomes. Our focus is on routine health information. MEval-SIFSA also works in partnership with PEPFAR partners operating at district and lower levels of the health care system.

The DDU capacity enhancement approach includes training workshops (in Data Analysis and Communicating Data for Decision Making), providing ongoing technical assistance, and developing information products. The diagram below shows how MEval-SIFSA's support will assist the DoH to increase the use of routine health information for decision/policy making and advocacy, which ultimately contributes to improved service delivery and health outcomes.



MEval-SIFSA Senior Technical Advisor Data Demand and Use, Roselyn Kareithi, PhD, conducting a Communicating Data for Decision Making training workshop (May 2015)



The **MEASURE Evaluation Strategic Information** for South Africa Project supports the Department of Health (DoH) at national, provincial, and district levels to improve strategic information for evidence-based management of HIV and related health programs. MEval-SIFSA seeks to ensure that the health system in South Africa produces useful and high-quality information that contributes to sustainable policy, planning, and programmatic decision making. MEval-SIFSA is a five-year project (June 2013 to September 2018) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

For additional information visit <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure/sifsa> or contact Nandipha Tyobeka, MEval-SIFSA Communications Officer, nandipha.tyobeka@jsi.org.za, + 27 (0) 12 346 7490.